

MR. SCHMIDT: Hi. My name is Phil Schmidt. I'm here to represent myself, Phillips Machine, and Delta County Economic Development, also known as DCED Group in Delta County supporting economic development. The population and average income in Delta County is declining. The average age is increasing. The young and middle-age population is leaving Delta County as there's little to keep them. For every coal miner's job lost, approximately five other support jobs are lost, including teachers, hospital staff, retailers, jobs in local government, and especially companies like Phillips have provided mining services and supplies. Loss of these jobs is stressful and emotionally devastating. I've seen it up close and personal. Phillips Machine has decreased from 45 employees in 2011 to now just a dozen workers. Overall, we've lost 220 jobs at Phillips, who is based in West Virginia. Those of us remaining at Phillips are subject to wage and salary cuts, along with higher cost benefits. We've, we've, we've suffered directly through 14 direct -- or coal company bankruptcies over the past few years. I'm not sure how we're still alive. Schools are suffering double. The State currently allocates \$7,200 per student to Delta County schools. And with declining enrollment, school programs are being cut; and educational opportunities are being sacrificed. Discretionary spending from the mines is going to stop. We've heard that earlier. Phillips has stopped that discretionary contribution program. [Indiscernible] recognizes the situation, and we are busy addressing it. Our goal is to maintain current economic providers in the area, while attracting and facilitating newcomers. We support diversification of our economic resources and will exploit new ideas and thoughts to promote our economy. We are involved with several projects, but none can account for the losses we've incurred of potential -- and potential losses we will further experience. While we are proud to support these programs, we are fully aware these same programs come with fewer and lower-paying jobs which is a concern for DCED. Now, for some reason, BLM feels the need to fix the coal leasing system and has curtailed coal leasing. Why? Is the process really broken? Or is this an action -- or is this action a convenient mechanism being utilized to comply with the administrative attack on coal and to cater to views that support that attack? I think so. And why does the coal leasing need to cease if new regulations are really needed?

It's unnecessary. I ask BLM to lift the, the moratorium on, on Federal coal leasing. And if the review of the Coal Leasing Program is needed, proceed. But, for the objective approach that is not punishing to responsible co-operators, their employees, and communities being so harshly impacted.